Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

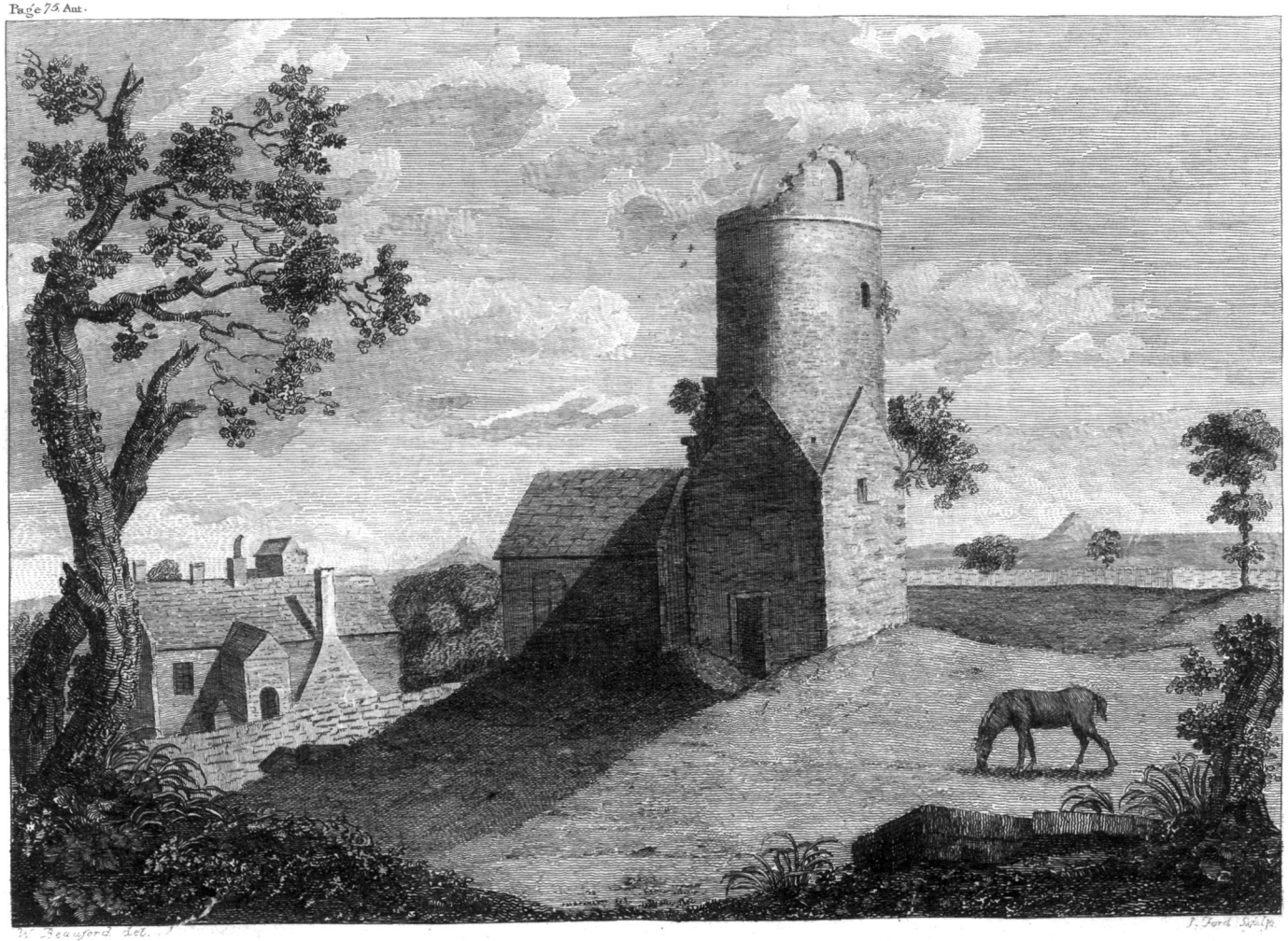
Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Page 75 Ant.



W. Beauford del. P. Ford Sculp.

KILLOSSY.

A MEMOIR *reſpecting the* ANTIQUITIES *of the* CHURCH *of* KILLOSSY, *in the County of* KILDARE; *with ſome* CONJECTURES *on the* ORIGIN *of the* ANCIENT IRISH CHURCHES. *By Mr.* WILLIAM BEAUFORD, *A. B.*

Read Jan. 20, 1790.

THE pariſh church of Killoſſy, in the barony of Naas and county of Kildare, for the ſingular conſtruction of its ſteeple, merits the attention of the curious in antiquities. The preſent church is modern, but ſtands on the foundation of the ancient, which it equals in every dimenſion, except the height of the roof, which originally was conſtructed of ſtone, as in the ancient churches of Glendaloch and Caſhel, as is apparent from ſome remains of it ſtill viſible at the tower. The tower which joins the church is round, and founded on a ſquare baſe, nearly half of the preſent height, each ſide terminating in a pediment or triangle of equal altitude, from one of which proceeded the ſtone roof of the old church.

THIS is probably an unique, being the only one of the kind, I believe, yet diſcovered in this kingdom, if not in the Britiſh iſles. The tower of the ivy church at Glendaloch, and the old church of Little Saxum near Bury in England, are thoſe which have the greateſt reſemblance to this of Killoſſy; but the ſquare baſe only of the tower at Glendaloch joins the church, and the whole tower at Saxum is round from the foundation*. In the iſland of Zante is, or was till lately, a Greek church exactly on the ſame conſtruction with this; alſo ſeveral others in various parts of the Levant†. The inſulated round towers, and the ſmall old churches diſcovered in Ireland, with ſtone roofs and circular arches, as thoſe of Caſhel and Glendaloch, and thoſe in England called Saxon, as well as thoſe in Spain named Maſſorabic, bear a great reſemblance to each other, and are apparently of the ſame origin‡; being all, moſt probably, conſtructed on the model of the Grecian architecture, but not in that noble ſtyle ſo conſpicuous in the monuments of ancient Greece and Rome, but in the degenerate ſtyle of the latter Greek empire, from the time of Arcadius at the beginning of the fifth, to the cloſe of the tenth century.

THE various Gothic and Vandalic tribes, which ſeated themſelves in the weſt of Europe, and on the ruins of the Greek and Roman

* Antiquarian Rep.

† Plan and View of Zante, by a French Engineer.—*Paris Edit.* See alſo Drummond's Travels, in which are views and plans of a number of curious buildings in the eaſt ſimilar to thoſe under conſideration, and round towers reſembling thoſe in Ireland, ſeveral of which have been converted into minarets by the Turks.

‡ Groſe's Antiquities, vol. 1. Antiq. Rep. Swinburn's Travels in Spain.

Roman empires, were undoubtedly ignorant of the art of conſtructing edifices of lime and ſtone; it muſt therefore have been from the inhabitants of the ſouthern parts of Europe that they obtained that knowledge, and the Grecian and Roman ſtyles of architecture of the middle ages became diffuſed through the weſt of Europe prior to the ninth century; as well from the zeal of the Greek and Roman miſſionaries, as from the ſpirit of pilgrimages to the holy land.

As early as the middle of the ſeventh century the Greek architecture was introduced among the Anglo Saxons by Greeks, who followed Theodorus, Archbiſhop of Canterbury. By the intereſt of Theodorus theſe Grecians eſtabliſhed a ſchool or academy at *Creekelade*, or *Greekeſlade*, in Wiltſhire, and erected that church in the Grecian architecture about the year 670*, reſembling which the church of Hexham was founded by Wilfred anno 674†, and the church of Weremouth by Benedict in 675‡. However it doth not appear that the Grecian and Roman architecture were common in Britain prior to the eſtabliſhment of the academies at Cordova and Otranto. For about the year 759 an academy was eſtabliſhed at Cordova by the Saracenic Prince Abdoulrahman, for the ſtudy of agriculture, geometry, aſtronomy, architecture and phyſic, by profeſſors brought from Greece, Conſtantinople, Egypt and the Eaſt; which academy, during the ninth and tenth centuries,

* Groſs's Antiq. vol. 1. Godwin's Eng. Biſhops, page 54, 558, 560.

† Godwin's Eng. Biſhops, p. 560.

‡ Groſs's Antiq. vol. 1.

centuries, was much frequented by the ſtudious of all nations and religions in the Weſt*.

Also, between the years 843 and 882, Charles the Bald eſtabliſhed a ſimilar academy at or near Otranto in Italy, and ſupplied it with learned men from Greece, principally prieſts†. In this ſeminary the Anglo Sexons maintained and educated a number of their youths, at the deſire of Alfred the great, and through the intereſt of Plegmund his tutor with Pope Marianus‡.

But the Iriſh in thoſe periods, not being under the dominion of the Roman pontiffs, would not be very deſirous of ſtudying either at Rome or in Italy, but chiefly applied to the Maſſorabic and Gothic Chriſtians, and reſorted to the academy of Cordova. A circumſtance which has cauſed the inhabitants of this iſland to look up to Spain with veneration§, and pilgrimages from hence to that kingdom were frequent down to the fifteenth century‖.

From theſe academies the Grecian and Roman architecture of the middles ages became diffuſed throughout the weſt of Europe, and divided into various branches among the ſeveral nations, by means

* Abulfud Amal. Swinburn's Travels in Spain. Voltaire.

† Swinburn' Travels through Sicily, vol. 1.

‡ Godwin's Eng. Biſhops, p. 60.

§ Keating, Chronicum Scotorum, and other I. MSS. ſpeak of theſe journies, and the connexion of the Iriſh Princes with Spain, though placed in too early periods.

‖ Smith's Hiſt. of Waterford.

means of the clergy and other learned perſons, who brought home with them certain foreign artificers, compoſed of Greeks and Italians, and Greeks and Spaniards formed into fraternities of architects, and who in ſubſequent periods joining thereunto French, Germans and Flemings, obtained papal bulls from their encouragement and particular privileges, became corporate bodies, and ranged from one nation to another, under the denomination of Free Maſons*. To the firſt of theſe fraternities we are indebted for the Roman, Saxon and Iriſh architecture of the middle ages, and to the latter for the various ſpecies of the Gothic, to the cloſe of the fifteenth century.

The ſeveral branches of the Grecian and Roman ſtyle during the middle ages, though they preſerved a general likeneſs of their original, differed in ſome reſpect from each other, according to the genius, taſte and manners of the people among whom they were cultivated. The Roman, Saracenic, Maſſorabic, Saxon and Iriſh, had ſome peculiar traits which ſpecified the nation in which they were erected.

The Saxon churches were generally rectangular edifices, terminating in a ſemicircle at the eaſtern end, and their roofs low, ſcarcely viſible above the cornice. The ſteeples, when they had any, were generally ſquare, and placed either at the weſt end or ſides; though ſome, not common, were round. And they had generally under them a cript or under croft, for the preſervation of

* Wren's Parentalia.

of ſacred reliques, &c. after the manners of the Romans and Italians*.

THE Iriſh alſo had cripts to their ſtone churches, but theſe cripts were not under but upper crofts, ſituated in the roofs between the circular ſtone ceiling and the ſtone pediment roof; as in the churches of Glendaloch and Caſhel, agreeable to the cuſtom of the Maſſorabic Chriſtians, who ſtill uſe ſuch apartments as choirs†. On this account the roofs of the Iriſh churches were raiſed remarkably high, and gave them a different appearance from thoſe of the Saxons. Another diſtinguiſhing feature between the Saxon and the Iriſh architecture, was the inſulated round tower of the latter, which the Anglo Saxons do not appear to have uſed, any more than the Italians, at leaſt very ſparingly; but numbers are to be found near the old Greek churches in the Eaſt, which were by the Moſlems adopted as minarets to their temples, and watch towers to their fortreſs; as appears from ſeveral ſtill remaining on the Ebro, and in other parts of Spain‡.

THOUGH it has been obſerved that the Greek architecture had been introduced into Britain about the middle of the ſeventh century, yet ſtone buildings were by no means common till towards the cloſe of the ninth; for St. Paul's Church, London, continued of wood to the year 900, when Biſhop Theodred rebuilt it of ſtone

* Groſe's Antiq. vol. 1.

† Swinburn's Travels in Spain.

‡ Ibid.

ſtone with an under croft after the Roman architecture, called ſince St. Faith's Church, which church was alſo again rebuilt in the Gothic ſtyle in 1087*.

THE Iriſh do not appear to have adopted this ſpecies of architecture, or to have built in lime and ſtone, prior to the ninth century. The firſt edifice of this kind was moſt probably the oratory of Malachy, about 850; towards the cloſe of which century the churches of Glendaloch were erected and ornamented in the taſte of the northern nations†. Soon after Cormac's chapel in 906‡; the monaſtery of Monaincha about 1000§; and the round tower of Kenith, in the county of Cork, in 1015‖. From this period, ſtone-roofed criptic churches and round towers became common in this iſland, and continued the reigning taſte for eccleſiaſtical buildings until the introduction of the Norman and Gothic architecture in the beginning of the twelfth century, when the ſtyle was diſcontinued.

HAVING thus, in as conciſe a manner as poſſible, given ſome conjectures relative to the origin of the ancient Iriſh churches, and the times of their erection, it will be neceſſary to con-

* Godwin's Eng. Biſhops.

† Ledwiche's Iriſh Antiquities.

‡ Harris's Iriſh Biſhops.

§ Ledwiche's Iriſh Antiq.

‖ Smith's Hiſtory of Cork, vol. 2.

ſider the period in which the church under conſideration was founded.

If we give credit to legendary accounts, St. Patrick founded an abbey here for his nephew St. Auxil, who died in 454, and who gave name to the church, that is, *Kill-auxaile*, *Kill-aſaille*, or *Ceall-uſall*, afterwards *Kill-uſſi* and *Killoſſy**. But leaving ſuch relations to the biographers of Saints, it may not be unneceſſary to obſerve, that the diſtrict in which this church ſtands was anciently denominated *Magh Laiſagh*, ſituated in Magh Libhiadh, the old name of the N. E. parts of the county of Kildare; and part of the demeſne lands of the O'Kelly's, chieftains of the country, who in the eighth century are ſaid to have founded a monaſtery here; the church and other buildings whereof, according to the faſhion of the country, were moſt probably erected of wood, and denominated from the diſtrict *Ceallmagh Laiſagh* or *Cillmoilaiſſy*, and from thence *Killmoloſſy* or *Killoſſy*, or the *Church of Magh Laiſſy*†. This monaſtery in 833 was burnt to the ground by the the Danes‡, and being rebuilt, was a ſecond time with Cillcullen or Killcullen deſtroyed in 984 by the Danes, under the command of Ambroſe ſon of Godfrey, when one thouſand perſons were taken priſoners, and the intire country deſtroyed§. After this period

* Arch. Monaſt. ex M'Geog. p. 658.

† Pſalter of Caſhel, Keating.

‡ Ann. 4 Maſters.

§ Ibid.

period the church was rebuilt of lime and ſtone, in the then new mode of architecture, of which the tower ſtill remains a monument, as in the annexed view.

THE ancient wooden churches, and other edifices of the Iriſh, being eaſily deſtroyed by fire, were conſtantly expoſed to the depredations of the Danes and other roving plunderers. There were no other means of ſaving the ſacred reliques, veſtments, &c. of the churches, and the wealth of the inhabitants, than by hiding them in ſubterraneous caves. The method therefore of building churches entirely of ſtone, with upper crofts, was a great improvement, as it gave a place of ſecurity to the goods of the inhabitants, as well as to the ſacred utenſils; for the churches being entirely of ſtone could not be eaſily burnt; and the entrances into the upper crofts, being only by narrow newel ſtairs, or by ladders through ſtone trap doors, they could not be plundered without pulling down the building, which in thoſe deſultory expeditions they had ſeldom time to do.

ON the arrival of the Engliſh, the diſtrict of Magh Laiſſy in Naaſe O'Felim, in the country of M'Caëlan or Kelly, with its church, was granted to Maurice Fitz Gerald by Henry the Second*, who erected a caſtle near the church, ſome remains of which are ſtill viſible. From this period Killoſſy became

 a pariſh

* Ware. Sir John Davis.

a pariſh church, which during the conteſt between the Iriſh and Engliſh was laid in ruins, and continued in that ſtate for ſeveral years; but it has lately been repaired for divine ſervice, by a grant from the board of Firſt-fruits.

On the weſt end of the church, under a riſing ground, are a number of ſubterraneous artificial caves, in a dry ſandy ſoil, with pediment roofs, and communicating with each other by ſmall apertures. One of theſe caves, near the church, had its ſides compoſed of ſtone, and covered with flat ſtones, in which was found part of a quern and the bones of ſome fowls. The other caves have no other wall or covering than the native earth. Theſe caves, with others of a ſimilar nature found in ſeveral parts of Ireland, were the granaries or magazines of the ancient inhabitants, in which they depoſited their corn and proviſions, and into which they alſo retreated in time of danger. In the Brehon Laws they are mentioned under the name of *Log*, and by thoſe laws a fine was inflicted on any perſon who ſtole any proviſions or goods out of them*. Theſe granaries are thus deſcribed by a Daniſh captain of the ninth century in the Iſlandic annals: "Leifr going a pyrating "towards the weſt, infeſted Ireland with his arms. Here he found "large ſubterraneous caves, whoſe entrances were diſmal and "dark, but on proceeding he ſaw the glittering of the weapons, "which the ſoldiers within held in their hands. Leifr killed the men, "and brought the ſwords away, together with a great quantity of "other

* Afuad lan log legad creice, viz. Aſda lan log legaide creachadh.

" other riches; whence he was afterwards called *Hiorleifr*, or " *Leifr* of the Swords *." Theſe caves were uſed as granaries long after the arrival of the Engliſh †; and numbers of various conſtructions have been from time to time diſcovered in ſeveral parts of the kingdom. Thoſe at Killoſſy ſeem to have belonged to the ancient monaſtery, and were within its incloſure.

* Antiq. Celto Scandic, p. 14, ex Landnamaboc.

† Cambrenſis, l. 2, c. 1.